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Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century"

Statement submitted by the International Alliance of Women, International Council of Women, International Federation of Business and Professional Women, International Federation of Settlements and Neighbourhood Centres, Soroptimist International, World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts and Zonta International, non-governmental organizations in general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council; All India Women's Conference, Associated Country Women of the World, Baha'i International Community, International Federation of University Women, International Federation of Women in Legal Careers, International Federation of Women Lawyers, National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Pan-Pacific and South-East Asia Women's Association, United States Committee for UNIFEM and World Young Women's Christian Association non-governmental organizations in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council; and Armenian International Women's Association, International Special Dietary Foods Industries, United Nations Association of the USA and World Union for Progressive Judaism, non-governmental organizations on the Roster

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 26 July 1996.

* E/CN.6/2001/1.

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We, international and national non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council or on the Roster and members of the NGO Committee on UNIFEM, strongly endorse the work of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) to create a world in which inequality based on gender, class, caste and ethnicity is absent from every country and from relationships among countries.

UNIFEM's initiatives reduce discrimination against women by:

(a) Providing financial and technical assistance to innovative programmes and strategies that promote women's human rights, political participation and economic security;

(b) Addressing the pandemic of violence against women and girls through its management of the United Nations Inter-agency Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women;

(c) Training women to use the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in monitoring individual Governments' progress in implementing commitments to women and in advocating for national laws to protect women and enhance their opportunities to exercise their human rights;

(d) Promoting the role of women in conflict-resolution and peace-building;

(e) Making accessible to decision makers and programme planners knowledge in support of gender equality and justice.

UNIFEM, recognizing that unequal gender relations have contributed to the spread of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, is cooperating with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to link policy, research and advocacy strategies at national and local levels to fight this disease.

In order to strengthen UNIFEM's efforts to advance its vision in this new millennium of a world where progress for women is progress for all, we strongly urge Member States to:

(a) Increase core contributions to UNIFEM, including additional financial support to the UNIFEM Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women;

(b) Support the UNIFEM programmes that increase the economic capacity of women by ensuring that globalization and trade policies become pro-poor, pro-sustainability and pro-equality;

(c) Build on the work UNIFEM has begun by publishing *Progress of the World's Women* and strengthen mechanisms for tracking progress on gender equality by gathering current and reliable statistics and data on women and girls;

(d) Recognize UNIFEM's crucial leadership and technical expertise in support of the historic Security Council debate on women, peace and security (October 2000) and support the Fund's expanded efforts to reduce the impact of war and armed conflict on women and build women's leadership as peace makers;

(e) Assist UNIFEM to promote the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Optional Protocol;

(f) Support the integration of women's interests and concerns into the basic documents and procedures for the formation of the International Criminal Court;

(g) Utilize new communication channels and technologies to bring the realities of women into direct contact with policy-making and intergovernmental processes.

We wholeheartedly endorse the important work of UNIFEM in supporting Governments and civil society in their work to advance the women of the world.